

## The Brookline Police Department Offers Emergency Preparedness Tips

### What You Can Do to Prepare:

#### 1. Create an emergency communications plan.

Choose an out-of-town contact that your family or household can call or e-mail to check on each other should a disaster occur. Your contact should live far enough away that they would not be affected by the disaster your family is facing and they should know they have been chosen as a contact. Make sure household members have the necessary contact information. If you have children, leave these contact numbers at your their schools and at your workplace. Your family should know that if telephones are not working, they need to be patient and try again later or try e-mail. Many people flood the telephone lines when emergencies happen but e-mail can sometimes get through when calls don't.

#### 2. Establish a meeting place.

Having a predetermined meeting place away from your home will save time and minimize confusion should your home be affected or the area evacuated. You may even want to make arrangements to stay with a family member or friend in case of an emergency. Be sure to include any pets in these plans, since pets are not permitted in shelters and some hotels.

#### 3. Assemble a disaster supplies kit.

If you need to evacuate your home or are asked to "shelter in place," having some essential supplies on hand will make you and your family more comfortable. Prepare a disaster supply kit in an easy-to-carry container such as a duffel bag or small plastic trashcan that will sustain you for 3 to 7 days. Include "special needs" items (infant formula or items for people with disabilities or older people), first aid supplies (including prescription medications), a change of clothing for each household member, sleeping bags or bedrolls, a battery powered radio or television, extra batteries, non-perishable food, and tools. You should have enough bottled water for one gallon per person per day. It is also a good idea to include some cash and copies of important family documents (birth certificates, passports and licenses) in your kit. Copies of essential documents-like powers of attorney, birth and marriage certificates, insurance policies, life insurance beneficiary designations and a copy of your will-should also be kept in a safe location outside your home. A safe deposit box or the home of a friend or family member who lives out of town is a good choice.

### If Disaster Strikes:

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Evacuate immediately if told to do so. Lock your homes when you leave. Travel routes specified by local officials, taking your disaster supply kit with you.

- If the disaster occurs near you, check for injuries. Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people. Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.
- If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for household damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly. Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- You may be asked to 'Shelter-in-Place'. This means to go indoors, close all doors & windows. Turn off window fans, dryer, kitchen and bath exhaust fans, air conditioners and other sources of outside air. If you are traveling in an automobile, close windows and air vents. Continue to monitor the media for further instructions.
- Call your family contact-do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.

### **Primary Evacuation Routes from Brookline:**

- Beacon Street
- Boylston Street (Route 9)

In the event of a total evacuation of Brookline, many residents will have access to private automobiles. People without access to automobiles should proceed to the following locations for evacuation by bus:

- 345 Harvard St - Devotion School
- Beacon & St. Mary's St - MBTA Station
- 50 School St - Pierce School
- 100 Eliot St - Heath School

*For more information on putting together a disaster plan, request a copy of the brochure titled **Your Family Disaster Plan (A4466)** from your local American Red Cross chapter. You may also want to request a copy of **Before Disaster Strikes . . . How to Make Sure You're Financially Prepared (A5075)** for specific information on what you can do now to protect your assets.*